

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2989

Introduced by Assembly Member Fuentes
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Berg, Carter, Feuer, Jones, Ma,
Price, Ruskin, Salas, and Saldana)
(Coauthors: Senators Ducheny and Padilla)

February 22, 2008

An act to add Part 2.3 (commencing with Section 71090) to Division 34 of the Public Resources Code, relating to parks and recreation.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2989, as introduced, Fuentes. Parks and recreation: Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program.

Existing law establishes the Office of Education and the Environment in the Integrated Waste Management Board for the purpose of implementing a statewide environmental education program.

This bill would establish the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Program, to be administered by the Director of Parks and Recreation, for the purpose of increasing the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor recreation and educational experiences by awarding grants to education programs that are available to the public and are operated by public entities or nonprofit organizations. The bill would create the Outdoor Environmental Education and Recreation Fund in the State Treasury that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, would be used for awarding grants pursuant to the program. The bill would authorize the director to accept for, and require the director to deposit in, the fund voluntary private donations made for support of the program. The bill would express the

Legislature's intent that the fund be capitalized with moneys from the California Environmental License Plate Fund and donations.

The bill would require the director to develop program components, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and staffing and budget needs. The bill would require the California Environmental Education Interagency Network to serve as an advisor to the director in developing the program components. The bill would require the director to give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs with specified attributes. The bill would require the director, by January 1, 2010, to submit to the Legislature a report on the criteria for the awarding of grants and the availability of grant funding.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) The California Environmental Education Interagency
4 Network (CEEIN) was established in 1993 as a consortium of
5 environmental educators representing departments, boards, and
6 commissions of the State Department of Education, the California
7 Environmental Protection Agency, the Resources Agency, and the
8 Department of Food and Agriculture. The primary goals of CEEIN
9 are to develop a unified response to the environmental education
10 needs of California's educators and local governments, and to
11 assist with the statewide educational reform movements.

12 (b) The Legislature enacted Chapter 663 of the Statutes of 2003,
13 which established the Outdoor Environmental Education Program,
14 and required a study on the benefits of outdoor environmental
15 education for at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups.
16 The study found that the science test scores of children who
17 participated in these programs were raised by 27 percent, and these
18 children also had improved conflict resolution and problem solving
19 skills, self-esteem, and motivation to learn. This program ended
20 on January 1, 2006.

21 (c) The Legislature enacted Resolution Chapter 101 of the
22 Statutes of 2006, which recognized the importance of local
23 recreation and park agencies in the effort to reverse negative trends

1 in inactivity, obesity, diabetes, and other health problems among
2 Californians and encouraged the state to utilize and partner with
3 local recreation and park providers to create a healthier state.

4 SEC. 2. Part 2.3 (commencing with Section 71090) is added
5 to Division 34 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

6
7 PART 2.3. OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
8 AND RECREATION
9

10 71090. As used in this part, the following terms have the
11 following meanings:

12 (a) "Director" means the Director of Parks and Recreation.

13 (b) "Fund" means the Outdoor Environmental Education and
14 Recreation Fund established pursuant to Section 71092.

15 (c) "Nonprofit organization" means a private, nonprofit
16 organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section
17 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

18 (d) "Program" means the Outdoor Environmental Education
19 and Recreation Program established pursuant to Section 71091.

20 71091. There is hereby established the Outdoor Environmental
21 Education and Recreation Program in the Department of Parks
22 and Recreation for the purpose of increasing the ability of
23 underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor
24 recreation and educational experiences by awarding grants to
25 education programs that are available to the public and are operated
26 by public entities or nonprofit organizations.

27 71092. (a) There is hereby established the Outdoor
28 Environmental Education and Recreation Fund in the State
29 Treasury that, upon appropriation by the Legislature, shall be used
30 for awarding grants to qualified outdoor environmental education
31 programs pursuant to this part.

32 (b) It is intended that the fund be capitalized with moneys from
33 the California Environmental License Plate Fund and from
34 donations accepted by the director pursuant to Section 71094.

35 71093. The director shall do all of the following:

36 (a) Administer the program to ensure that priority is given to
37 underserved populations, including both urban and rural areas and
38 low-income communities where participation in an outdoor
39 environmental education program has been limited.

(b) (1) Develop the components of the program and the fund, including, but not limited to, criteria for awarding grants, and staffing and budget needs.

(2) The California Environmental Education Interagency Network (CEEIN) shall serve as advisor to the director in developing the program components.

(3) In developing eligibility criteria for awarding grants, the director shall consider the long-term financial sustainability of the program.

(4) In developing the criteria for awarding grant moneys, the director shall give priority for funding, where feasible, to outdoor environmental education programs that have the following attributes:

(A) Serve primarily at-risk youth and underserved demographic groups.

(B) Encompass a partnership between public and private entities.

(C) Contribute to healthy lifestyles, including sound nutrition and outdoor exercise and recreation.

(D) Maximize the number of participants that can be served.

(E) Commit in-kind resources to the outdoor environmental education program.

(F) Have a curriculum that is aligned to the science content standards for California public schools adopted by the State Board of Education, foster stewardship of the environment, and include, when available, curriculum established pursuant to Part 4 (commencing with Section 71300) of Division 34.

(G) Include service learning and community outreach components for the purpose of building partnerships between participants and local communities.

(c) Submit a report to the Legislature on the criteria developed for the awarding of grants pursuant to this part and the availability of grant funding. The director may also suggest in the report further legislative action to improve the implementation of this program. The report shall be submitted to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2010.

71094. The director may accept and shall deposit into the fund voluntary private donations made for the support of the program.